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**CERTIFICATE OF BUSINESS FICTITIOUS FIRM NAME**

We the undersigned do hereby certify that we are transacting a partnership business in the City of Torrance, County of Los Angeles, State of California, under the name of Torrance Syndicate, the principal place of business at 16th and Hickory streets, in said City, and that said business consists of buying and selling real property; that the names of all members of such partnership are set forth in the following list and that the place of residence of each member is set forth immediately after his name in said list, to-wit:

- Clarence T. Bowen, 233 So. Irena Redondo Beach, Cal.; Harry Clark, 1548 Barlow Ave., Torrance, Cal.; William H. Campbell, 1816 Andros St., Torrance, Cal.; J. E. Dickson, 1103 So. Ave., Los Angeles, Cal.; Arthur J. Goulding, 1611 No. Kenia, Los Angeles, Cal.; Geo. A. Penwell, 1701 Santa Rosa, Los Angeles, Cal.; M. H. Gilbert, 16th Elm Sts., Torrance, Cal.; Fred Pen, 2063 Carson St., Torrance, Cal.; J. W. Haughton, 146 W. 55th St., Los Angeles, Cal.; Carl L. Hyde, and Hickory Sts., Torrance, Cal.; Sam Levy, El Prado Apts., Torrance, Cal.; Mary Maltby, 427 Figueroa St., Los Angeles, Cal.; Margaret Maltby, 427 So. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, Cal.; J. McEwing, 624 No. Guadalupe, Redondo Beach, Cal.; Alpheus A. Penwell, 14 W. Vernon Ave., Los Angeles, Cal.; William E. Stewart, 920 Ogden Drive, Los Angeles, Cal.; Ernest Stevens, 532 So. Fremont Ave., Los Angeles, Cal.; Charles W. Walker, 2723 Carson St., Torrance, Cal.; Frank Walker, Ironton Hotel, Torrance, Cal.; George S. Wheaton,

1228 Arlington Ave., Torrance, Cal.; Walter G. White, 4411 Pasadena Ave., Los Angeles, Cal.; Guy Woolley, 333 Brent St., Los Angeles, Cal.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** we have hereunto set our signatures this 1st day of July, 1923.

Clarence T. Bowen, Harry R. Clark, William H. Campbell, J. E. Dickson, Arthur A. Goulding, Geo. A. Gilks, W. H. Gilbert, Fren Hansen, J. W. Haughton, Carl L. Hyde, Sam Levy, Mary Maltby, Margaret Maltby, J. McEwing, Alpheus A. Penwell, William E. Stewart, Ernest A. Stevens, Charles W. Stock, Frank Walker, George S. Wheaton, Walter G. White, Guy Woolley.

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, ss**

On this 1st day of July, 1923, before me, A. H. Bartlett, a notary public in and for said county and state, residing therein, duly commissioned and sworn, personally appeared Clarence T. Bowen, J. E. Dickson, W. H. Gilbert, Carl L. Hyde, Margaret Maltby, William E. Stewart, Frank Walker, Guy Woolley, Harry R. Clark, Geo. A. Gilks, Fred Hansen, Sam Levy, J. McEwing, Ernest A. Stevens, George S. Wheaton, William H. Campbell, Arthur A. Goulding, J. W. Haughton, Mary Maltby, Alpheus A. Penwell, Charles W. Stock, Walter G. White, known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the above instrument and acknowledged to me that they executed the same.

WITNESS my hand and seal the day and year first above written.  
 A. H. BARTLETT,  
 Notary Public in and for said County and State (SEAL)

**P. E. SPARKS**

Mr. and Mrs. Mayfield and son of Amapola avenue, are spending a week's vacation at the Pacific Electric camp in the San Bernardino mountains.

Mrs. Twedell was the guest of her son in Inglewood this week

Francis P. Lewis of Amapola avenue is still very ill in the Pacific hospital, Los Angeles.

**OUT OF THE DARKNESS**

(Continued from Last Week) (To be continued)

Bartley pushed back his chair and half dragged me to my feet. We started to grope our way between the chairs toward the place from which the cry had come. The room was still in darkness and our progress was very slow. Then the lights began to flicker very dimly, and suddenly flashed on again in all their power.

At first glance, there seemed to be nothing wrong; then I noticed that King was bending over his desk, his face dead white, his eyes fixed on something on the floor in front of him, and fear showing in every feature. I realized suddenly that the chauffeur's chair was empty, and that Roche was on his knees before some object. Miss Potter, who had also been staring at the floor, fainted and fell sidewise into the arms of her niece. Then I saw what was the matter: the chauffeur was lying on the floor, with his face white, and his eyes closed.

Bartley dropped to his knees beside Roche and gave one searching look at the man, then straightened up with a queer expression on his face. He pointed silently to the chauffeur. On his brown coat, slowly darkening and widening, was a splotch of blood, and from his breast protruded the hilt of a knife.

For a moment my head swam. Only a short time before the lights had gone out the chauffeur had had a self-confident sneer on his face; now he was lying on the floor, white and still, a knife in his breast. Another murder had taken place in Slyke's house, and this time in a room crowded with people.

The district attorney and Doctor Webster had by now reached our side, and the doctor knelt down by the chauffeur. With a glance at the excited crowd pushing his way toward us, Bartley suggested to Roche that he clear the room of all but the family. It was not until he had called some of his men to his aid that he was able to make the excited spectators obey his orders and withdraw. Doctor King was assisting Ruth to restore her aunt to consciousness. As for Bartley, myself and Black, who had come forward, we had eyes for nothing but the silent figure of the chauffeur.

Doctor Webster opened his coat and examined the wound. Then, when he had turned back his eyelids and felt his pulse, he slowly shook his head and said to Bartley: "He can't live more than five minutes. The knife reached his heart."

"Will he recover consciousness before he dies?" Bartley asked.

"I can't say. He might, for a moment."

Even as he spoke the chauffeur opened his eyes, eyes that still retained their look of horror and dazed surprise. Weakly his glance traveled over the faces bending over him; he tried to raise one hand, but the effort was too much for him and his eyes closed again. When he opened them a second time, he seemed to recog-

nize Bartley and gave him such an appealing look that he bent closer. His eyes had begun to glaze and his face to take on a waxen hue. Though his lips moved feebly, no words came from them. Then, with a final effort, he gathered up what little strength he had left, and, in a voice so low we could hardly distinguish the words, he stammered forth, "The—robbery—robbery. Those men—innocent, ask—boy."

His voice died away and his eyelids sank; then he opened them again and gasped, "The—boy—he knows."

I saw Bartley's face lighten, but he did not speak. Briffeur lay so still that we thought he had ceased to breathe; but, as the doctor started to rise, he made a sudden effort to sit



"I—Killed—"

up, and Bartley put his arm under him. With eyes flashing, he cried in a loud voice, "Slyke—murdered—I—". His arm rose from his side and pointed straight in front of him, his finger almost touching Doctor Webster, who gazed down at him, puzzled. "I—killed—". The chauffeur's voice broke; his lips ceased to move; and, without even a sigh, his head fell back. The chauffeur would never speak again.

Silently we rose to our feet, and stood looking down at the dead man. We were all too overcome by what had taken place, to speak. It seemed impossible that a man could have been done to death in a roomful of people with the chief of police on one side of him and three detectives near him. But murdered he had been. Bartley seemed to feel as dazed as I did; for he took the knife the doctor handed him, without looking at it, his eyes upon the chauffeur and on his face a very odd expression. None of us seemed fully able to grasp that a man had been murdered almost before our eyes.

Doctor King had been working over Miss Potter, and she now opened her eyes and glanced around wildly. She saw the body at her feet, and with a little cry asked, "What happened?" No one answered for a moment; and then Bartley replied simply, "Someone has murdered the chauffeur."

At the word murder she gasped and covered her eyes with her hand. After a moment she removed it, and stammered, "H-how—who?"

No one attempted to answer. The truth was that no one could. All we knew was that he had been killed by the knife that was now in Bartley's hand. But how, why, and by whom it was done, none of us knew. It seemed incredible that anyone could have crept up to the murdered man in the dark without being heard by those seated on either side of him. His cry had lasted but the barest fraction of a second; it seemed scarcely time enough between the moment when the lights went out and the time when the cry came for anyone to have come up to him, murdered him, and gotten away again. The murder must have been committed by someone near him. On one side of him had been Miss Potter; and, on the other, Roche. Roche was above suspicion; a police chief does not kill his prisoner unless he attempts to escape. Then I remembered the strange look that had passed between Miss Potter and the chauffeur when the latter had entered the room.

Though there had evidently been ill-feeling between the two, it seemed absurd to suppose that she had killed him. To have done it, she would have had to have known that he would be seated beside her. I knew that no one but the coroner had known beforehand how the witnesses would be placed. Nor could she have known that the lights would go out just when they did, and thus give a chance to strike the blow. It dawned on me, at this point, that she could not have known that the chauffeur would be called as a witness, and might not have even known that he had been arrested. Yet the blow had been struck by some one near her, and very near to him.

At this moment Roche hurried into the room, his fat red face flushed to an even redder hue, his eyes wide and curious.

"What shall I do with those people outside?" he asked the district attorney. "I got them out of the house, but the reporters are howling their heads off. They want to know what has happened."

The attorney gave Bartley an appealing look.

"If I were you," Bartley told him, "I would call the inquest off for today at least. You have heard all the

important evidence. What Briffeur might have said we shall never know. Our duty now is to try and discover what happened to the poor chap."

He turned to Doctor King. "If I were you, Doctor, I would take the name of every one that was in the room this afternoon. You might tell the reporters, Roche, that we will talk to them later."

As both King and the district attorney nodded, Roche hurried from the room, but returned a moment later. Again we stood hesitating, no one seeming to know just what to do next, waiting for Bartley to take the lead. Seeing that we were depending on him, he walked to the desk where King had sat, and called us around him.

Silently he turned the knife over and over in his hand, then gave it to each of us in turn to examine. It was a curious kind of a knife, looking as if it had had hard usage. The handle was of wood, rather heavy, and the blade, some four inches long, came to a fine, sharp point. As the blade did not close, it was an awkward weapon to carry around, and I wondered where the murderer had hidden it. The more I looked at it, the more I wondered what it had been used for. It was not a hunting knife, although it somewhat resembled one, of that I was sure. In fact, it was unlike any knife that I had ever seen.

We all looked at it silently; and, when the last to handle it had placed it back on the desk, Bartley picked it up for a second time.

"This is the weapon that killed Briffeur. You wonder why I allowed you to touch it instead of keeping it for finger prints. You will find no finger prints; for whoever used it had sense enough to have his hand covered."

Suddenly I remembered that he had said the same thing about the murderer of Slyke. There had been no finger prints found in the rooms or on the revolver. I wondered if there could be any connection between the two deaths.

"It is, of course, significant," Bartley continued, his voice grave, "that this man was killed as he was about to testify. It looks very much as if someone in the room feared that he might tell who killed Slyke, and, to prevent it, took a great chance and killed him in a room full of people."

Doctor King, in a rather excited voice, broke in to say, "But, Mr. Bartley, no one could have known that the lights would go out. I myself did not even know that Briffeur was to testify, and I doubt if anyone else did."

Bartley listened to the doctor's words with a grave face. "That is so, King. So far as I know, only Roche, Black, the district attorney and myself knew that the chauffeur would testify. None of us knew, however, what he was going to say, for he had refused to tell us. It is absurd to think that any of us killed Briffeur. Felt, Black and myself were at the rear of the room. The district attorney was at least seven feet away from him. The only person near him was our friend Roche."

The red face of the police chief turned even redder. In astonishment he hastily stammered; "My G—, Mr. Bartley, you don't think I killed him, do you?"

Under any other circumstances his dismay would have been so humorous that we all would have laughed, but we had no desire to do so now. We all agreed with Bartley, when he assured him that no one had even thought for a moment that he had committed the murder. He added that his remark had been intended simply to show how mysterious the crime was.

"It seems almost incredible," he continued after a short pause, "that the chauffeur could have been killed while we were all in the room with him. But he has been, and we must find out who did it. I think the best thing to do will be for each of us to seat himself just where he was when the lights went out. But first, we had better remove the body."

Black, Roche and Doctor Webster raised the chauffeur's body and carried him from the room, followed by Doctor King. While they were gone, Bartley got down on his knees before the chair in which the chauffeur had sat, and examined the heavy dark blue carpet which covered the floor. He was searching for a clue, I knew, that would give a hint as to how the murder had been committed. Miss Potter and Ruth, who had resumed their old seats, watched him with white faces.

When he rose to his feet Bartley stood looking silently down at the floor with a little frown on his face. At last he turned to me and said, "When Briffeur came into this room and took his chair, Felt, he was, of course, facing the coroner and the district attorney. When we found him after the lights came on, he had sunk to the floor in a position directly opposite to that in which he was seated—that is, with his back to them. It may be that, at the moment of the blow, he had half turned to see what had happened to the lights, or he may have swung around after the blow as he was slipping to the floor."

I nodded, and he continued, "You notice that the blow came very close to the center of the heart. The murderer knew where to strike. If his knife had reached the place aimed for, the chauffeur would have died without uttering a word. In fact—"

He was prevented from saying more by the return of the others. At his suggestion, they took the places they had occupied when the lights went out. I was asked to take the chair that Briffeur had been in. This placed Roche on my left, so near that I



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